

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC HEARING – HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN)**

April 5, 2005

6:30 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Gatsas.

Mayor Baines asked would everyone please remain standing and pause for a moment of silent prayer and I would ask to keep in your thoughts and prayers Pope John Paul II and ask for God's blessing and thankfulness for his great service to his Church and for the cause of freedom around the world.

The Clerk called the roll. There were thirteen Aldermen present.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Gatsas, Guinta, Sysyn, Osborne, Porter, O'Neil,
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith and Forest

Absent: Alderman Thibault

Mayor Baines advises that the purpose of the special meeting is to allow public input to the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan, which was developed for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, helps prepare the City by taking measures to reduce future losses due to natural or man-made disasters and will allow funding opportunities to prepare for and recover from disaster impacts. Anyone wishing to speak must first step to the nearest microphone when recognized, state his/her name and address in a clear, loud voice for the record. Each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; and any questions must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that Robert MacKenzie, Director of Planning, make a presentation.

Mr. MacKenzie stated again this is fairly straight forward we have a fairly short presentation and then allow for public testimony. This is a plan that the City is doing for both the City's benefit but also to address requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is a plan that will allow us to apply for different grants both preventative type grants but also if there was a natural disaster and this weekend we're fortunate we didn't have the flooding that some other parts of New England had, but if there was a natural disaster, for example, it would allow us to get fairly quick and financial support from the federal government. I did want to recognize that this was a committee effort by a number of

the City agencies and boards. A few of those people are here tonight, we have representatives from the Planning Board, Highway, and perhaps a couple of other members...there were a number of departments involved from the emergency services to other people. Tonight I'm going to ask Jennifer Czysz to provide a very brief presentation on what this plan is. Jennifer is with the Southern NH Planning Commission...Southern NH provided staff support and actually wrote the document for the committee. So, I'd like to introduce Jennifer.

Ms. Jennifer Czysz stated let me give you a brief overview of the document contents by explaining what it Hazard Mitigation and what the benefits of having a plan and like Mr. MacKenzie mentioned it is essential to have as of November 1, 2004 to have an adopted and approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in effect to receive grant money both disaster mitigation and post-disaster recovery from FEMA. The document continues to describe the location of Manchester, population, topography, climate and current land use development trends. It's a brief historical overview and then also looks at how any future growth within the City may impact any natural hazard event. The Plan proposes what a disaster risk assessment...essentially dollar amount estimates that could be expected in the event of a hazard...the numbers are not guarantees. As I said they're estimates. To come up with these estimates we used committee knowledge of past events, data that we collected on essential facilities and their building values, city-wide affecting data and some additional standard calculations developed by FEMA. East of the hazard types have been described including events from flooding, wind, fire, ice and snow, seismic and other hazards. In total there are 25 hazards presented in the Plan and each one is defined, a brief history given and then a statement of a probability of it occurring and causing damage within the City. We've also mapped the hazard zones within the City. This includes flood plains, areas of steep slopes and the various fire hazards. Then as part of this Plan we did just a summary of essential facilities within the City. These include critical facilities such as city offices, Police Department, Fire Department, areas at risk which would include elderly housing, schools, child care, major employers where employers with more than 25 employees are located and then hazardous materials such as above-ground storage tanks, underground storage tanks, hazardous waste generators and for each of these we determined which are located in the various hazard zones and presented summary tables to give an idea of were there to be a flood what is at risk within the City and what are the values of those buildings at risk. Then we did an analysis of what existing programs within the City are in effect to mitigate any potential hazards. This includes Zoning Ordinances, Emergency Management Plan, Fire Codes...we then reviewed each of those to see whether there were any improvements needed to any of those programs and the committee identified 8 different improvements. We then said given this what do we need to do in the future to prevent any events or mitigate the effects. The committee identified 15 additional new projects. We then identified who within the City would be responsible for these projects and what the potential funding sources are out there including doing a little bit of research on what grant projects would be applicable to us. Lastly, those projects were prioritized and put into an approximate implementation

schedule and reviewed for how much they might potentially cost. The last section of the Plan is a description of the adoption process and implementation and the remainder of the document are supporting documents.

Mr. MacKenzie stated that concludes the presentation.

Mayor Baines asked are there any questions from members of the Board?

Alderman DeVries stated Mr. MacKenzie maybe you can tell me...when did the committee form and start this process, how long has this been going on for?

Mr. MacKenzie replied this has been going on for close to a year. It was started I think the middle of last year.

Alderman DeVries stated when I was looking through the list of the 24 hazards that were there I was kind of surprised to see listed at #20 an area that's been approved through the Planning Board for development and that's Bass Island. I just wondered if you could coin for me how the ranking at #20 and a hazard amount plays into that particular property today where there's pending development and I realize it says...it looks like it's recommending that the City acquire that property.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the City did review the application on part of Bass Island. They demonstrated that in effect that portion that was to be developed for the Wild Willy's proposal was not in the regulatory flood way, that was one of the main concerns of the Planning Board, they did a lot of engineering work to demonstrate that where the property was going to be...there are other parts of Bass Island though that are still in the regulatory flood way and could be considered for acquisition.

Alderman DeVries stated so you're telling me that the remaining properties there that have not been before the Planning Board are what you are referring to here in item 20.

Mr. MacKenzie stated yes.

Alderman DeVries stated can you tell me a little bit more information because you indicated that there are grant monies available for hazard mitigation...that would be one of the hazard mitigation's that we're talking about, so maybe you can explain that process...how those are rated or ranked...if you can do that tonight.

Mr. MacKenzie stated briefly there are funds from FEMA directly for certain projects from construction projects...we've identified, for example, some drainage area problems in the City. I also believe that this being included in the Plan will help us with points or in

formulas for other grants beyond FEMA and I just wanted to check with Jennifer to see if she wanted to add to that.

Ms. Czysz stated acquisition of properties within a flood zone are within a regulatory flood way is a project that is eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation grant. So, it would be specifically eligible for that.

Alderman Shea stated in calculating the cost of all of the different projects, Bob, I came to about \$206,177,700...what role does the City have to play in this in terms of expending the taxpayers money for some of this implementation, is it done on a prioritized basis versus the government, the city, the state, etc...just briefly, you don't have to be too long.

Mr. MacKenzie stated it is...spending all of that money would basically protect us in total from disasters. We do have to evaluate the percentage risk, for example, earthquakes which is relatively moderate to low in Manchester. It's more important to prioritize and say which ones of those are the most important to do and can we do it with other monies other than City funds or in the end should we do it with City funds.

Alderman Shea stated the City itself has to have a certain plan in terms of keeping different City properties up to a certain level or a certain par by using taxpayers money but then in the event of a catastrophic situation we can appeal to the federal government or the state for funding of repairs or improvements and so forth. Is that what you're actually looking at?

Mr. MacKenzie replied yes. After a disaster this helps us get into the queue more quickly with federal disaster relief but it does allow us even before a disaster if there's some protection for say let's say sewer pump stations that are in flood hazard areas we can now apply for grants to help protect those and make sure they're not harmed.

Alderman Roy stated while you noticed you went right to the dollars and cents of this program I appreciate the time that the committee put into this but staying on the funding line first of a question of Bob. Have all of the organizations that are listed as potential funding sources been a part of developing this plan or have they been notified that we'll be looking for funding?

Mr. MacKenzie stated you mean the committee members.

Alderman Roy stated no. In Section V, the Sources of Grants...have any preparations been made to start going after some of these funds?

Mr. MacKenzie replied the only one that's been officially notified is FEMA. They are aware of the City's Plan, they have basically said it is approvable subject to approval of this Board. So, FEMA is aware that the City has prepared it and would be requesting funds.

Alderman Roy stated looking at as Chairman Shea mentioned there's a lot of high dollar ticket items in this Plan but there are also some under five and ten thousand dollar low-cost fixes that can be down out of City operating...could we, after approval, get a list of what you feel are those priorities that we can fix in the short-term and maybe weed that list down to the high ticket items that we have to wait years for.

Mr. MacKenzie replied yes we could do that.

Alderman Guinta stated in Section V under the Priority Implementation...the funding column is after the review of potential funding sources, what the funding sources are for itemized ranking.

Ms. Czysz stated it's a preliminary identification of what the potential, possible sources are and what we say at the end of the section is that when the City is ready to really look at any one project then a more in-depth analysis was done.

Alderman Guinta stated I'd be curious to get a little bit more in-depth analysis on #21 Replacing Aging Highway Equipment...the \$5 million. I don't know exactly what highway equipment means...it identifies here just strictly highway and DPW...are they talking about other response vehicles?

Mr. MacKenzie replied no that would be the Highway Department mostly vehicles but I don't think it may include some other equipment other than vehicles.

Alderman Guinta asked what kind of vehicles clears roads for emergencies...like snow removal.

Mr. MacKenzie stated basically this implies that our fleet and I think the Board knows this, our fleet is aged and is in generally not the greatest shape. So, eventually the City recognizes it does have to start to get on a better motorized equipment replacement program. So, our dump trucks, our graders, our backhoes...generally, it's a fairly old fleet.

Alderman DeVries stated when we look at item 10 on the list which talks about our three bridges crossing the Merrimack River and they're maybe not being up to engineering standards for seismic we do have one other bridge not completed and that would be the new airport access bridge I realize it's a little further south but since that is a State DOT project is it safe to assume that that might meet the standards and thereby diminish item 10 on this list of ranks.

Mr. MacKenzie replied I never assume too much anymore.

Alderman DeVries stated we don't even assume that it will be built anymore it's only been 20 years in the making.

Mr. MacKenzie stated general State Highway does put a lot of effort into seismic issues so I would presume that they have done a good job with the earthquake and seismic issues.

Alderman Smith in reference to Section V, item 10 again Queen City Bridge...as you well know with the traffic and the construction of the new rotary at Granite Street and new bridge there's going to be excessive traffic entering Queen City Bridge it will probably be one of the few avenues to get to the Verizon and the Riverfront Ballpark and as you well know if you come off of I-293, I believe it's Exit 4, there's a right-hand turn and people are going to 293 and they're in the wrong lane...I was wondering in your status if we should have some kind of a turnaround with right lane only and the people would have to go across the Queen City Bridge. If you follow me we've got backups all the way up onto 293 on the ramp right now and it's only going to get more serious, not better and I don't know if that's in your plans with Southern NH Planning or what.

Mr. MacKenzie stated that is not in our plans at this time that's probably something we could talk to the Highway Department about in more detail.

Alderman Smith stated I did talk to the Highway Department for three years on this proposal and I haven't gotten anyplace and as you well know I think it should be a combination of City and State because it stacks up on that ramp Exit 4 right onto the I-293 highway and I think it should be a combination State and City to try and resolve this problem, a serious problem it really is especially from four to six o'clock at night.

Mayor Baines stated I just want to remind the Board that we have to have time for public testimony and move this process along.

Alderman Gatsas stated Mr. MacKenzie can I have some clarification here. We just heard a number thrown out by the Chairman of the Board of \$206 million...I didn't add them up, but I believe his arithmetic being correct and \$200 million of it is \$150 from the CSO project that I assume is already in place and moving along, is that correct or incorrect?

Mr. MacKenzie replied to date of that roughly \$150 million \$50 million has been committed for Phase I of CSO so about a third of that \$150 million.

Alderman Gatsas stated other funds...when you say committed you're talking the City side commitment or the federal side.

Mr. MacKenzie stated federal commitment for CSO is sporadic so at this point the majority of funds needed for CSO will be City taxpayer through the sewer use fees and that has not

been programmed yet. The balance of the \$100 million has not been programmed by the City that is just an estimate of what we will need to meet all of the federal requirements.

Alderman Gatsas stated I just read an article in the paper this week that said the rates were going up to take care of this.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the most recent rate proposal and Tom Seigle's not here...the most recent one was proposed to take care of the serious flooding problems at the Valley Cemetery. There's a problem there where you have combined sewer and drainage flowing up into the Valley Cemetery and that particular rate only applies to that particular situation.

Mayor Baines stated thank you for your presentation.

Mayor Baines called for those wishing to speak.

Jane Beaulieu, 609 So. Main Street, Manchester, NH, stated:

I did have a few hours last night to review this Mitigation Plan. I do want to thank everybody that was on the committee, I think it was a very well put together document and I'm here just to support the Mitigation Plan at this time.

Attorney Bob Backus, 1318 Goffstown Road, Manchester, NH, stated:

I've looked over this Mitigation Plan and it looks like a really good piece of work. I just want to respond briefly to something brought up by Alderman DeVries about Bass Island and Mr. MacKenzie said a portion of Bass Island was in the flood hazard zone. Actually, the entire island I believe is a matter of City ordinances within the Flood Hazard Zone. This was something that came up in the litigation over the approval of the Planning Board for the restaurant proposal, a fast food restaurant and the City at that time conceded that there had not been an adoption by the City of a change in the flood map by FEMA as a result of which I think the entirety of Bass Island is within the special hazard zone for floodway. I just wanted to make that point.

This being a special meeting of the Board no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk